

(b) The main cause of acute shortage of water in Rajasthan is deficient rainfall. For overcoming the shortage Government of Rajasthan have taken up construction of water harvesting structures/Anicuts under various schemes for water recharging besides rehabilitation of traditional methods of water storages like wells, Bawari tanks etc. and conjunctive use of surface and ground water. State Government have also undertaken construction of small structures like check dams, percolation tanks etc. Efforts are also being made to formulate an implement ground water legislation. As a long term measure national Water Development Agency is also carrying out the feasibility studies for interbasin transfer of water which will benefit Rajasthan.

Irrigation Projects in Rajasthan

304. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

whether any provision has been made for irrigation project in Rajasthan to help farmers in view of the drought situation in the State;

if so the nature of the provision made; and

the towns and districts in Rajasthan which are likely to be benefited from the provisions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) Funds/assistance to fight drought affected situation in the States is not provided by the Ministry of Water Resources. However Ministry is providing Central Loan Assistance under Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme for expeditious completion of ongoing major/medium irrigation projects.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Finalization of New "Water Policy

305. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state;

whether Government have since finalized New Water Policy;

if so, the details thereof; and

if not, the reasons therefor and by when it is likely to be finalized?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) to (c) The revised draft National Water Policy was considered in the 4th meeting of National Water Resources Council held on 7th July, 2000 under the chairmanship of Hon'ble Prime Minister for finalisation.

The deliberations established a broad consensus among the states on most of the issues contained in the proposed policy. However, some areas of differences still remain. In order to achieve greater convergence and agreement on these issues it has been decided to constitute a Working Group of Minister of all the States/UTs chaired by Hon'ble Minister of Water Resources.

Distilling of River Ganga

306. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

whether it is a fact that because of massive silting, the river Ganga particularly in Bihar, U.P. and Bengal has significantly strayed from its traditional course;

whether it is a fact that Farakkha Barrage is seriously impeding the flow of water of river Ganga and causing massive silting; and

what steps Government are contemplating to remove the silt and take other steps to restore the purity of river Ganga?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) No study to ascertain the extent of straying of river Ganga from its traditional course has been carried out. However, the river Ganga attempts to stray from its traditional course due to its meandering nature in alluvial reach depending upon water discharge, sediment load and slope of the river bed.

No, Sir.

Flood Management Works including distilling of rivers is a State Subject and as such these works are planned, executed and maintained by the respective States out of their own State Plan Funds according to the priorities fixed by them. Central Government as per existing procedure provides technical advice and conducts appraisal of schemes when referred by the State Governments for clearance. No proposal/scheme for removal of silt and to take further steps